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afterwards, but the mother would bring out the piece of dried flesh quite frequently and examine it very carefully to see if it had begun to decay. This she did as long as she lived. She claimed that her son was still living, for the flesh was well preserved. She said that soon after his death the piece of skin will commence to decay, and not before. After the mother died, about 1843, the sisters kept the piece of flesh as carefully, with the same notions about its preservation and decay.

SHOOTING WITCHES IN CREAM. — In one of the newer towns in Orleans County, Vermont, about sixty years ago, a farmer churned some cream nearly all day without "bringing the butter." He said the witches had got into the cream and that was the cause of all the delay. He deliberately loaded his musket and fired the whole charge into the cream, fully in the belief that he would do no injury to the cream, but would dispel the witches. It was not long before he had the satisfaction of seeing the "butter come," and he exulted over his sagacity in dealing with those occult forces. Within a very few years I have heard people express themselves in such a way that betrayed their belief in witchcraft. But they were not found in the better class of society.

A POSSESSED OWL. — About fifty years ago, while a father and son were clearing land in Grafton County, in the valley of the Connecticut River, an owl alighted near them, and lingered in their neighborhood; they tried to take it alive, and made several attempts to shoot it, but the gun missed fire. The young man believed that the soul of some curious and ill-disposed person was in the owl, and caused it to approach, for the purpose of finding out secrets, or listening to conversation. After the spirit had gone, the owl was left free to act according to its nature and fly away. No owl, it was afterwards thought, could have turned its head in so human-like a way, unless possessed by the spirit of man.

LETTER TO THE RATS. — In Grafton County, a farmer's wife, being troubled with rats, was advised to write them a letter, advising them to leave. This she did; but being a conscientious person, she also requested them not to go to any of her neighbors' dwellings, but into the woods, where they would injure no one. The letter was folded, addressed to the rats, and placed in one of the most frequented rat-holes in the walls of the house. The letter I heard read; it was written in a very humble spirit.

John MacNab Currier.

NEWPORT, VT.

THE MAGPIE AND THE FOX (A Corean Tale). — Once upon a time a magpie had made its nest in the branches of a tree, and was rearing its young, when a fox came along that way.

"Mrs. Magpie," he cried out, "throw me down one of your little ones."

"No, I won't," said she.

"Well," returned the fox, "if you don't, I will climb up and take them all."

This greatly frightened the magpie, which in Coreia is a very foolish bird, so she threw down one of her young, which the fox devoured. The next day he came again, and by means of the same threat, got another little bird.

Now a quail, having heard the talk between the fox and the magpie, went to her, and told her how silly she was, that a fox could not climb a tree, and that she must not be frightened by him. The next morning, when the fox came to get his daily dish of magpie, the mother told him what the quail had said, and refused to let him have a nestling, so that he had to go away hungry. He then went to the quail, and said that it was a sorry trick to have played him, for now he had nothing to eat.

"Do not worry," said the clever little quail (for I must tell you that in this country quails are very clever), "I will furnish you with a meal every day."

The next day, the quail saw a woman coming out to the field, with a big bowl of rice on her head for the workmen's dinner. The little bird lit just in front of her, and the woman tried to catch it; but just as she thought she was about to put her hands on it, the quail flew farther off, and she followed it. The woman finally got so excited by the chase, that she put down the bowl of food, and ran after the quail, who enticed her a long way off.

Then the quail flew quickly to the fox, and told him where to find the rice left by the woman. The fox galloped away, found the bowl, and got a good meal.

The quail repeated this trick several days, but finally got tired of working so hard, and went to consult with a stork, a very wise bird, to see if he would be justified in trying to kill the fox; the stork said that he unquestionably had the right to do so, and the quail sought an occasion to get rid of its persecutor.

One day a man from a village near by came out to the fields to trap birds. The quail then said to the fox: "My friend, let me cover you up with grass, that this hunter may not see you." The fox consented, and the quail covered it in such a manner that it could not be distinguished from the surrounding grass. Then it flew off, and lit near the trap. It was so lame that the man thought he could kill it with a stick that he had in his hands, but when he tried he missed his aim, and striking his trap, broke it all to pieces. He then got very angry, and pursued the little bird with his stick, while it skipped along a little ahead of him.

Finally it hopped on the little mound of grass under which the fox lay concealed, and there awaited the approach of its pursuer. He aimed a great blow at the bird, who managed to evade it, so that it came down with all the force of the man's arm on the head of the fox, and killed him on the spot.

This tale was collected in Peking, from a Chinaman who speaks Corean.

Dorothy Rockhill.

THE SONG OF THE ANCIENT PEOPLE. — It has been my good fortune within the past week to have an opportunity of perusing Miss Edna Dean Proctor's charming poem, "The Song of the Ancient People." I do not wish to assume the part of a critic beyond calling attention to the remarkable fidelity of the descriptive matter, the correct local flavor, so to speak, of the whole poem. It could not be more accurate were it written by a